



Security Council

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Note by the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit a letter dated 21 December 2004 from the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa to the President of the Security Council, transmitting the report on the activities of the Ad Hoc Working Group for the period 2003-2004 (see annex).



Annex

Letter dated 21 December 2004 from the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa to the President of the Security Council

On behalf of the Security Council Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, I have the honour to submit herewith the report on the activities of the Ad Hoc Working Group for the period 2003-2004 under the Chairmanship of Angola (see appendix). I will fully appreciate it if the report could be circulated as a document of the Council.

(Signed) Ismael A. Gaspar Martins
Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group on
Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa

Appendix

Report on the activities of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa for the period 2003-2004

Introduction

Security Council members will recall that the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa issued a detailed interim report (S/2003/1118) on its activities in 2003. Some aspects of that report are also referred to in the present one, taking into account their linkages and the continuity in the implementation of the mandate of the Ad Hoc Working Group.

Security Council members will also recall that the Ad Hoc Working Group, established pursuant to the recommendations of the public meeting on the situation in Africa held in New York on 31 January 2003, has the following mandate, according to document S/2002/207:

- (a) To monitor the implementation of recommendations contained in document S/PRST/2002/2 and previous presidential statements and resolutions regarding conflict prevention and resolution in Africa;
- (b) To propose recommendations on the enhancement of cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council as well as with other United Nations agencies dealing with conflicts;
- (c) To examine, in particular, regional and cross-conflict issues that affect the Security Council's work on African conflict prevention and resolution;
- (d) To propose recommendations to the Security Council to enhance cooperation in conflict prevention and resolution between the United Nations and the African Union and subregional organizations.

The agenda proposed by the Chairmanship of Angola for the period under review was based on the recommendations of the above-mentioned Security Council public meeting on the situation in Africa; on the proposals made during the Presidency of Mauritius of the Ad Hoc Working Group to ensure continuity; and on new items included in the Chronogram of Action for 2003-2004.

In this connection, the Ad Hoc Working Group undertook or was involved in the actions described below.

Conflict prevention and resolution

International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region: the Conference aimed at mobilizing the international community for assistance to the process of the Conference; other States Members of the United Nations were invited to participate. The holding of the first Summit of the Conference on 19 and 20 November 2004 in Dar es Salaam (United Republic of Tanzania) was an important development in this process.

Democratic Republic of the Congo: the Ad Hoc Working Group focused on enhancing the role of the United Nations and encouraged the parties to comply with their commitments. The enhanced role of the United Nations Organization Mission

in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was a positive development and responded to concerns raised by the members of the Ad Hoc Working Group during the meeting on the Democratic Republic of the Congo held on 16 April 2003.

On 30 May 2003, at the wrap-up session of the Presidency of Pakistan of the Security Council on conflicts in Africa, Council missions and United Nations mechanisms to promote peace, the Chairman, speaking on behalf of the Ad Hoc Working Group, stated that the ad hoc working groups, if properly used, could be important tools in promoting peace and addressing the crises that afflict the African continent and called for better coordination among those ad hoc working groups.

The Ad Hoc Working Group developed a partnership with the International Peace Academy and a joint meeting was held on 7 June 2004 including presentations on various issues made by distinguished personalities from academic institutions in the United States of America.

One panel considered the following theme: "Constraints, challenges and opportunities: resolving conflicts in the twenty-first century". Presentations were made on Somalia, on the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and on the Security Council and conflict prevention in Africa.

Another panel considered regional and international norms on unconstitutional regime changes. Presentations were made on the role and capabilities of the African Union, constitutional disorders in Africa and lessons from lusophone Africa, particularly Guinea-Bissau.

Participants held a useful exchange of views on those themes, covering most of the items in the Ad Hoc Working Group's agenda for 2004. This has constituted a new experience in respect of the future work of the Ad Hoc Working Group. The participation of academicians from different universities and the expression of different opinions constituted an enriching factor.

Security Council missions to Africa

On the basis of its informal discussions and interaction with other relevant players, the Ad Hoc Working Group contributed inputs to the Security Council missions to Africa. The Ad Hoc Working Group held meetings prior to the missions of the Council to Central and West Africa in 2003 and 2004. Those meetings offered a good opportunity for an exchange of views between Council members, the representatives of the countries visited by the missions and other interested States Members of the United Nations.

Cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council

The Ad Hoc Working Group enhanced its working relationship with the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on Guinea-Bissau and Burundi, both chaired by South Africa, and with the Group of Friends of Guinea-Bissau, chaired by the Gambia. In the meetings held, the need for the return to constitutional normalcy in Guinea-Bissau was stressed, and the international

community was called upon to take steps to help the country find a lasting solution to its multifaceted problems through a comprehensive approach.

With regard to Burundi, at a meeting held on 15 March 2004, the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Burundi made concrete recommendations on ways in which the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council should work together comprehensively to assist in peace, reconciliation, recovery and rehabilitation of that country.

The extension to other post-conflict situations of cooperation between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, developed by the two bodies in the case of Guinea-Bissau and Burundi, constitutes one of the chief recommendations of the Ad Hoc Working Group.

The Chairman of the Group, or his representatives, participated in meetings and videoconferences organized by the above-mentioned Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Groups.

The Ad Hoc Working Group encourages the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council to develop similar experiences for other post-conflict situations.

African Union and other relevant bodies

Representatives of the African Union Chairmanship and of the Permanent Observer Mission of the African Union in New York have been closely associated with the meetings of the Ad Hoc Working Group, within the framework of its mandate aimed at enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union.

The adoption by the Security Council of a presidential statement in its special meeting in Nairobi (Kenya) on the institutional cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations (S/PRST/2004/44), and the cooperation between the two bodies in the cases of the Sudanese region of Darfur and Burundi, are tangible results of this increased relationship.

The Ad Hoc Working Group is thus well placed to play an incremental role in developing further the cooperation between the newly created Peace and Security Council of the African Union and the United Nations Security Council.

The Office of the Special Adviser on Africa has been associated to the meetings of the Ad Hoc Working Group, taking into account its role in the promotion of the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

Observations

Members of the Security Council will recall that the creation of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa was proposed on the initiative of Mauritius following the public meeting of the Council on the situation in Africa held in New York on 29 January 2002.

Following its three-year existence, it is time to reflect on how the Ad Hoc Working Group can fully implement its mandate in order to play its role more effectively within the Security Council framework.

Regarding conflict prevention and resolution, the Ad Hoc Working Group has carried out actions aimed at examining regional and cross-conflict issues that affect the Security Council's work.

In order to diversify the viewpoints on issues examined by the Ad Hoc Working Group, the Ad Hoc Working Group has taken advantage of its informal character by involving non-Security Council members and by developing partnerships with other institutions, such as the International Peace Academy.

In the paper on conflict recovery in Africa, the World Bank stated that, by their very nature, African conflicts have become a development issue and, in this connection, the Ad Hoc Working Group will continue working on strengthening its relationship with the Economic and Social Council Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on countries emerging from conflict.

In its presidential statement of 19 November 2004 (S/PRST/2004/44) on the institutional relationship with the African Union, adopted in Nairobi, the Security Council invited the Secretary-General to explore, in close cooperation with the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, new means of cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union, specially taking into consideration the expanded mandate and the new Organs of the African Union, and bearing in mind that conflict prevention, management and resolution in Africa must entail complementary efforts by the Africans and the international partners.

Finally, the Security Council may wish to consider including in its agenda some important pending issues such as disarmament, demobilization, resettlement and reintegration in the context of peacebuilding, and the cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union and the peace and security mechanisms established by some African subregional organizations, in order to develop integrated approaches to conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

The Ad Hoc Working Group could consider holding a meeting on good-neighbourly relations in Africa, stressing their importance for the prevention and resolution of conflicts.

New York, 21 December 2004